STUMPTOWN™

GREG RUCKA • MATTHEW SOUTHWORTH • RICO RENZI

ONI PRESS

ISSUE #3

STUMPTOWN™

PORTLAND, OREGON ISSUE #3

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CHARLOTTE, LISTEN, I WANT TO *HELP* YOU.

STAY *AWAY* FROM HER, PARIOS!

JESUS, ISABEL. . .

. . . YOU AFRAID I'M GONNA *HIT* HER . . .

. . . OR HIT *ON* HER?

YOU CALLED *ME*, CHARLOTTE . . .

. . . YOU SAID YOU WERE AFRAID FOR YOUR *LIFE*. WHO'RE YOU *AFRAID* OF?

I DON'T . . .

. . .I DON'T KNOW WHO TO *TRUST.*

TRUST ME.

DON'T--

--SHE'S WORKING FOR *HIM!*

DON'T *LISTEN* TO HER!

AND WHY IS IT I *DON'T* BELIEVE YOU'VE GOT CHARLOTTE'S *BEST* INTERESTS IN MIND?

I'M WORKING FOR YOUR *GRANDMOTHER,* CHARLOTTE. *NOT* OSCAR, *NOT* MR. MARENCO.

YOUR *GRANDMOTHER.*

C'MON, LET'S GET *OUT* OF HERE, YOU CAN *CALL* SUE-LYNNE, SHE'LL TELL YOU I'M ON THE *LEVEL--*

SHE'S *LYING!* DON'T *LISTEN* TO HER.

I'M NOT.

I'M TRYING TO *HELP* YOU.

WE DON'T *NEED* YOUR *HELP!*

HNN

ISABEL!

SHE'LL BE ALL RIGHT, COME ON--

GROAN

--WE'VE GOT TO *HURRY!*

V
A
OUCH
DING!

EXCUSE ME! MA'AM, ARE--

WHICH WAY?

TWO WOMEN, WHICH WAY?

USELESS.

I'M NOT-- I DON'T--

MA'AM?

CAN I BRING YOUR CAR AROUND?

SHE VALETED HER CAR ...

BET YOU'RE REALLY REGRETTING HAVING VALET-PARKED, HUH?

UH, NO, I DON'T *THINK* SO, BABY.

I'LL JUST HOLD ON TO THIS FOR YOU.

LET'S GO.

ISABEL CAN COME, TOO, IF SHE WANTS TO.

WHERE ARE YOU TAKING US?

SOMEONE MIGHT GET *HURT.*

MY PLACE.

I'M PARKED AROUND THE *CORNER*. . .

. . .OVER HERE.

LOOK AT THIS, WHALE.

WE GOT *BOTH* OF THEM.

YOU TWO, MOVE OVER HERE.

WHALE, GRAB THE PRETTY LITTLE *SQUAW* THERE.

YOU FUCKING *IDIOT*. . .

--YOU *LED* THEM RIGHT *TO* US!

I AM GETTING *SO* TIRED OF YOUR *BULLSHIT*, ISABEL. . .

. . . ALL YOU DO IS BITCH BITCH BITCH--

--BITCH!

YOU PUT A *HAND* ON HER--

--I LET *WEATHER* INTO YOUR *SKULL*.

BOTH OF YOU, GET IN THE CAR.

MOVE! BEFORE SOMEBODY CALLS THE *COPS!*

I'M GOING AS *FAST* AS I CAN!

HURRY!

OH, *PLEASE* GO FOR IT.

I ACTUALLY *WANT* TO SHOOT *YOU.*

CHARLOTTE!!

I'M *TRYING*--

--THERE'S NO ≷HFF≶ *ROOM!*

YEAH, IT'S KINDA A MESS, I APOLOGIZE.

HOLD ON A SECOND. . .

. . .DON'T WANT YOU FOLLOWING US.

CLK

CLK

CLK

CLK

CLK

SORRY ABOUT THIS!

WAIT!

GIRL, YOU'VE GOT THE WORST LUCK I'VE *EVER* SEEN.

TELL ME ABOUT IT.

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, IT WON'T BE A PROBLEM FOR YOU MUCH LONGER.

SHIT--

--GET HER!

HEYTHANKS--

--ISABELSAIDITWASOKAYIFIDROVEIT--

HEY, WAIT--

JESUS CHRIST!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? WHAT HAPPENED?

GOT COLD-COCKED.

NEED ICE.

COLD-COCKED? LIKE IN THE *MOVIES?*

LIKE IT *BETTER* IN THE *MOVIES.*

HURTS LESS.

YOU NEED TO GO TO THE *HOSPITAL,* DEX. YOU COULD HAVE A *CONCUSSION* OR--

IT'S OKAY, GREY. REALLY.

ANSEL ASLEEP?

YEAH, WENT TO BED AN *HOUR* AGO.

WE HAD FISHSTICKS FOR DINNER, PLAYED *CALL OF DUTY.*

FISHSTICKS, YUM.

THANKS FOR WATCHING HIM.

YOU SHOULD HEAD HOME.

I CAN STICK AROUND.

I'M FINE, GREY.

SLEEP WELL.

YOU TOO.

YOU, UH... YOU KNOW WHERE I AM IF YOU NEED ME.

barsuk ser

G'NIGHT, DEX.

from our garden
FROZEN
RNNGG MNGG
RNNGG MNGG
RNNGG MNGG
3:47
RNNGG MNGG
RNNGG M--
PARIOS.
YOU FUCKING *BITCH*, I WILL *KILL* YOU.
I WANT MY *PORSCHE* BACK!

ISABEL?

YOUR CAR'S A PIECE OF *SHIT!*

I HAD EVERYTHING UNDER *CONTROL*--

--UNTIL *YOU* LED OSCAR'S *GOONS*--

CALL END

CALL ME *BITCH* AGAIN, I'LL HANG UP ON YOU AGAIN.
CLEAR?

. . .I *HATE* YOU.
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU DON'T *KNOW* ME.
OH, I *KNOW* YOU, MISS PARIOS.
YOU'RE JUST LIKE *EVERYONE* ELSE, ALL TRYING TO GET MY FATHER'S *RESPECT,* ALL TRYING TO GET HIS *MONEY.*
NOT ME.

WHY'S YOUR *BROTHER* TRYING TO *KILL* CHARLOTTE?
. . .
YEAH, THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.
HERE'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO, ISABEL. . .

". . .YOU AND CHARLOTTE ARE GOING TO MEET ME AT TEN AT MOUNT TABOR, OKAY? SAY THE SOUTH PICNIC AREA. . ."

". . .IT'S NICE AND OPEN UP THERE, AND YOU'LL BE ABLE TO TELL THAT I'M ALONE. . ."

". . .I'LL BRING YOUR CAR, AND YOU'LL GIVE ME SOME ANSWERS. . ."

I DON'T SEE CHARLOTTE.

AND YOU'RE NOT GOING TO, EITHER.

SHE'S SOMEWHERE SAFE.

SAFE FROM WHO?

YOU. OSCAR. PAPA. WHOEVER.

GIVE ME MY DAMN KEYS.

NOT YET.

YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE ME SOME ANSWERS, REMEMBER?

YOU'RE A DETECTIVE, GET THEM YOURSELF.

SWEETHEART, THAT *IS* WHAT I'M DOING.

LET'S TAKE A WALK.

WHY'S YOUR BROTHER TRYING TO KILL CHARLOTTE?

WHO SAYS HE IS?

IT'S EITHER HIM OR YOUR *FATHER*, AND THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL DILL AND WHALE WORK FOR *HIM*, ISABEL.

HE DIDN'T GET WHERE HE IS BY EMPLOYING *THUGS*. GUYS LIKE WILLIAM ARE MUCH MORE HIS SPEED.

YOU'RE WORKING FOR MY *FATHER*--

NO, I'M *NOT*, AND I'M GETTING TIRED OF REPEATING MYSELF.

SUE-LYNNE HIRED ME TO *FIND* CHARLOTTE.

THAT'S *IT*, THAT'S *ALL*.

CHRIST, YOU'RE NOT SAYING YOUR *FATHER* WANTS CHARLOTTE DEAD, *TOO*?

NO!

PAPA *WOULDN'T*...

HE'S JUST...

HE'S TRYING TO *CLEAN-UP* AFTER OSCAR.

THAT SOMETHING HE HAS TO DO A LOT?

MORE THAN YOU'D BELIEVE.

AND WHAT ABOUT *YOU?*

IS YOUR INTEREST IN CHARLOTTE BECAUSE OF THE *FAMILY BUSINESS,* OR SOMETHING *ELSE?*

YOU DON'T KNOW *MUCH* ABOUT MY CULTURE, MISS PARIOS.

WOMEN HAVE *NO PLACE* IN THE FAMILY BUSINESS.

SO IT'S A *PERSONAL* INVOLVEMENT..

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN* BY THAT?

THE THING BETWEEN YOU AND CHARLOTTE, IT'S *PERSONAL*--

THERE'S NO *"THING"* BETWEEN US. SHE'S MY *FRIEND.*

SURE.

WE'RE FRIENDS, THAT'S *ALL.*

SURE.

OSCAR. . . *SEDUCED* CHARLOTTE. HE *TRICKED* HER.

WHY?

SHE'S AN *ARCHAEOLOGY* STUDENT, SPECIALIZES IN NATIVE AMERICAN SITES.

AND WITH HER *TRIBAL* CONNECTIONS--

HE WAS USING HER TO GET AT THE *DIG SITES.*

THEN HE'D *ROB* THE SITES AND *SELL* WHAT HE STOLE.

SHE DIDN'T *KNOW?*

NOT AT FIRST.

AND SHE TOLD *YOU,* AND YOU SAW A WAY TO *SCREW* YOUR BROTHER OVER.

NICE WAY TO HELP A *FRIEND,* ISABEL.

I DIDN'T THINK HE'D TRY TO *KILL* HER!

AND YOUR FATHER? WHAT'D YOU THINK *HE'D* DO WHEN HE FOUND OUT, WHICH HE *OBVIOUSLY* DID?

SEND HER A FUCKING *FRUIT BASKET?*

PAPA ISN'T TRYING TO *KILL* HER, HE JUST WANTS TO PROTECT *OSCAR!*

KILLING CHARLOTTE *DOES* PROTECT OSCAR, ISABEL!

NO, IT'S *NOT* LIKE THAT!

PAPA DOESN'T WANT OSCAR IN THE *BUSINESS.* HE *NEVER* HAS, BUT OSCAR WON'T STAY *OUT* OF IT!

HE KEEPS TRYING TO *IMPRESS* PAPA, THIS WAS JUST *ANOTHER* WAY TO DO IT!

WHERE'S CHARLOTTE?

I'M *NOT*--

WHERE IS SHE?!?

UP NEAR TIMBERLINE.

THERE'S A *CABIN,* SHE'S... SHE'S *THERE.*

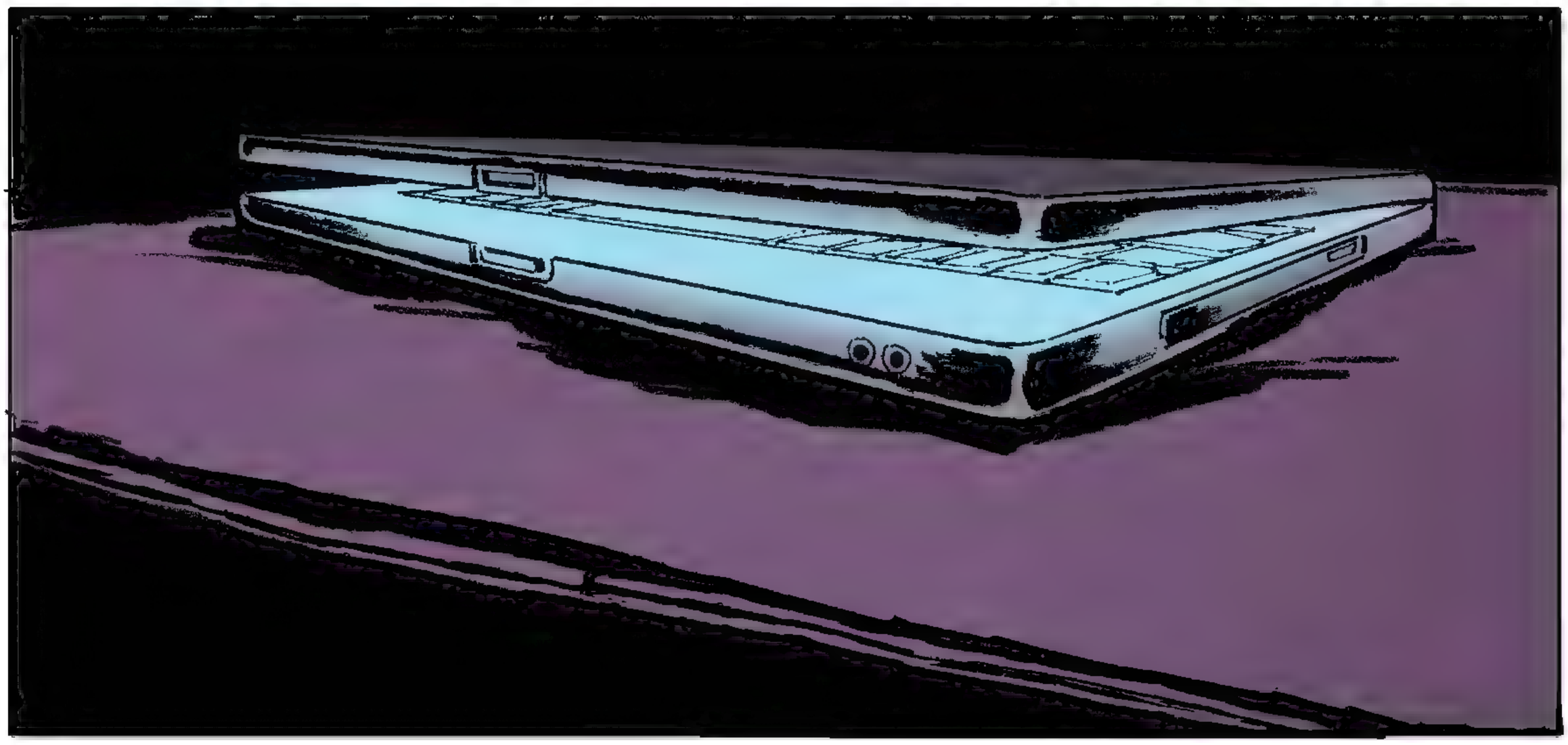
SHOW ME.

ISABEL?

ISABEL, IS THAT YOU?

HELLO, CHARLOTTE.

AH!



THE HOURS AND THE TIMES

You've got your monthly comic books, and they're twenty-two pages and they're produced by a whole mess of people, somebody's doing the plotting, somebody's doing the writing, somebody's penciling the damn thing and he's got an assistant making him sandwiches and scanning things, you got a guy inking the pencil lines and he's got his kids erasing things and ruling the panel borders, there's a letterer, you got your color team, everybody's in the kitchen and this is just to make a meal of characters that've been around for 45 years anyway. But every month you get your meal.

Then you've got your indie books that come out once every couple of years, and they're made by a guy in his underwear listening to indie rock and he's taking the heart off his sleeve and gluing it to the paper, and he's doing this in between his hours at the vintage clothing store and his second job as a gym teacher.

And then there's *Stumptown*. This book, it's a collaboration, see? But it's less like a business meeting than like a couple of bored kids making something up while their moms wash clothes at the Laundromat. And on top of that, it's more for your money, see? Twenty-two pages? Bah! This is more like thirty pages or twenty-seven pages or thirty-six pages depending on how we're feeling about it. And what that does is it gives you the story you deserve regardless of how much you paid. This is called value.

We get paid the same amount for twenty-two pages as we do for thirty-six, and when the Deadline Man comes to the door, we just hide in the bathroom and pretend nobody's home, 'cuz this is about telling you a story, dammit, and trying and trying to get it to you on time. And maybe not quite making it. But getting close, right?

Issue 3, Greg writes page 17, page 18, page 19, page 21, page 22. Hold it right there. There's no page 20. But what this means is there's a little room to expand now. So what's the smart move?

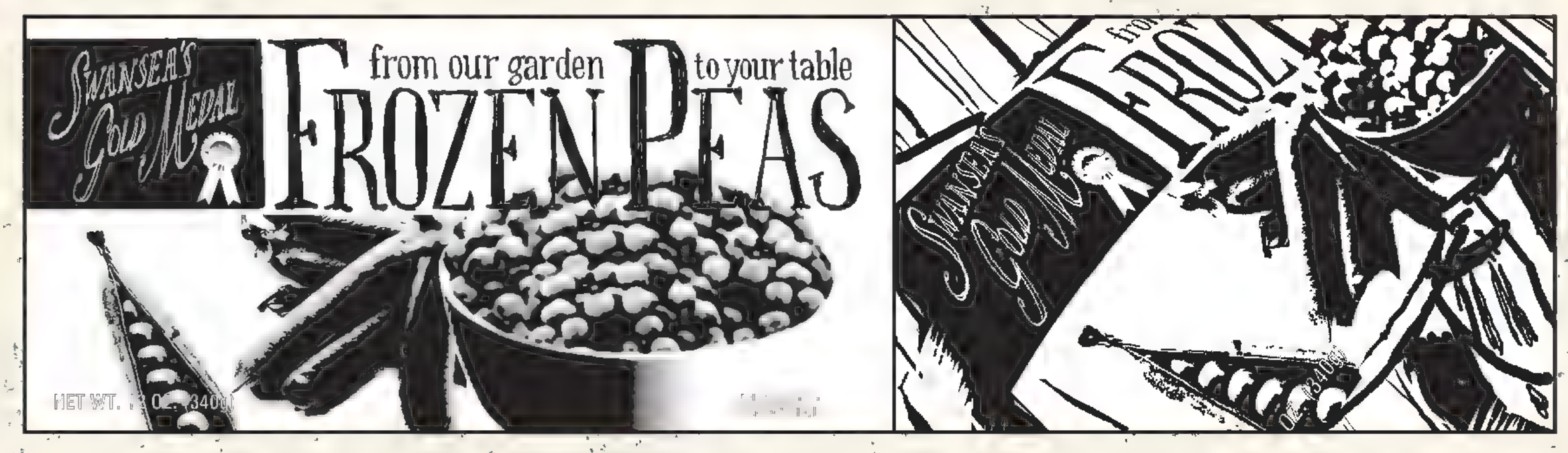
Keep in mind that I'm writing this on December 3, 2009 at 2:12 in the a.m. I'm roughly a month behind schedule at this point, and I'm in trouble with the planned twenty-six pages in this issue (that I've now discovered are only twenty-five) already. Got about ten to go, spending about fifteen hours a page lately, and that's a lot of hours left. But Greg says "you can spread out a little if you want." Now the smart move—you can see this coming—the professional move, the intelligent thing to do is to say "well, it's only gonna be twenty-five pages now," and I'm one step closer to getting done. But I'm telling you a story. And I want it to be special, and there's this part where I can really do something...

And so I don't make the smart move, I make the dumb move even though editor James Lucas Jones wrote me the following message at 3:33 yesterday: "Hey sir, how is this looking think you'll be wrapped up this week?" The lack of separation betwixt the two sentences—not even a comma splice!—a symbol of the anxiety in the office, a hint of the desperation that would you just get the damn thing done, Matt, so we can move on. I make the decision that I'm not going to add a page. I'll add several. At the moment we're up to two extra—just so I can do this big double-page spread thing to really hit a beat—and I haven't figured out the big scene following, but I need it to feel right, and after that big ringing open chord of the double-page spread, I may need a little extra melody at the end to end the song on the proper note. Hell, maybe it's better short.

Rest assured I'll spend an extra day making it shorter if that's the dumb move. I'm diligent that way, giving you your money's worth.

So it's January 6, 2010 now, and issue 3 is being colored, and it's time to get to work on issue 4. There's a thing about doing comics, that it's a lot of work for something that gets consumed so quickly, and the pressure is constant. I finished yesterday and was happy with most of it (!) and felt a weight lift for about two hours. Then a heavier weight—the unfinished 30-odd pages of issue 4 that need to get done.

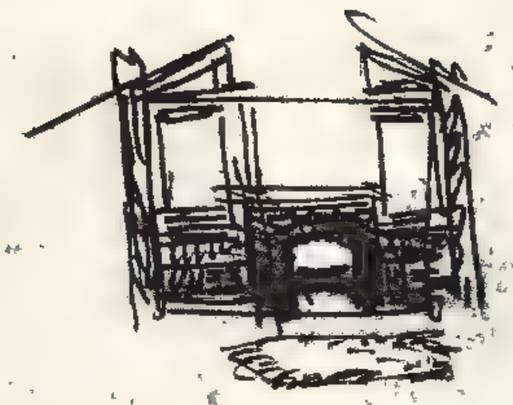
This is also suffused with a sense of excitement and anticipation—what do I get to do this time, what happens to Dex, what happens to Ansel, what happens to Grey? This is all a part of the serial nature of comics, the thing that drew me to them after several years on the margins of the film industry. I'd seen so many people work so hard just to put something together, maybe even something meaningful, only to find that A) no one would ever produce that screenplay, B) they might buy it, but they never intended to make it, C) they might make it and completely change the whole thing so the original author had no sense of ownership, and most of all D) it would take years and years.



I had more fun designing this package of Frozen Peas than I did on anything else in this whole issue. I spent about two and a half hours on it. I'm hoping the health care overhaul will help me get treatment.

These are the pencils for the first panel of the issue, which was a real bear for some reason. I redrew this several times trying to get something dramatic but not too arresting—it's the first page of this issue but it's the middle of a scene from last issue, too? Serial versus collected...

Panel one without the carpet overlay.



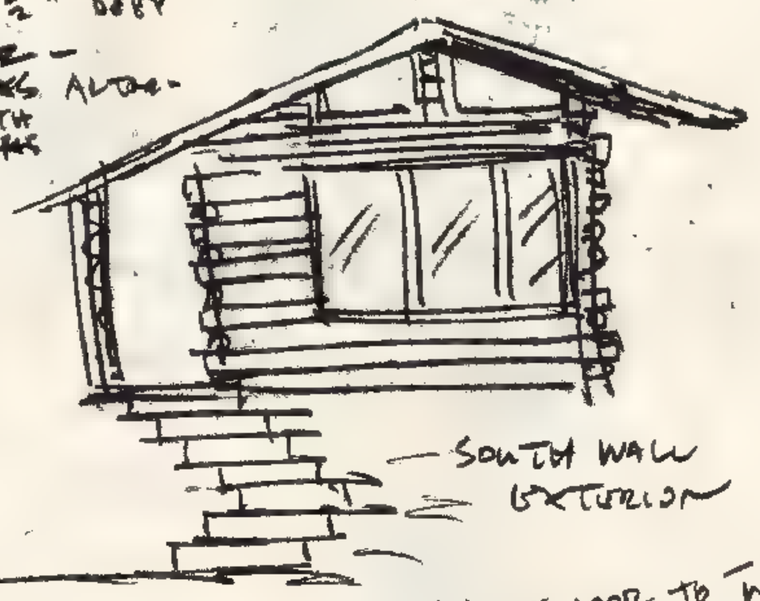
STONE FIREPLACE - POSSIBLY ROCK
LOG CABIN CONSTRUCTION?
POST + BEAM CONSTRUCTION

ONE STORY W/ LOFT

BACK DOOR

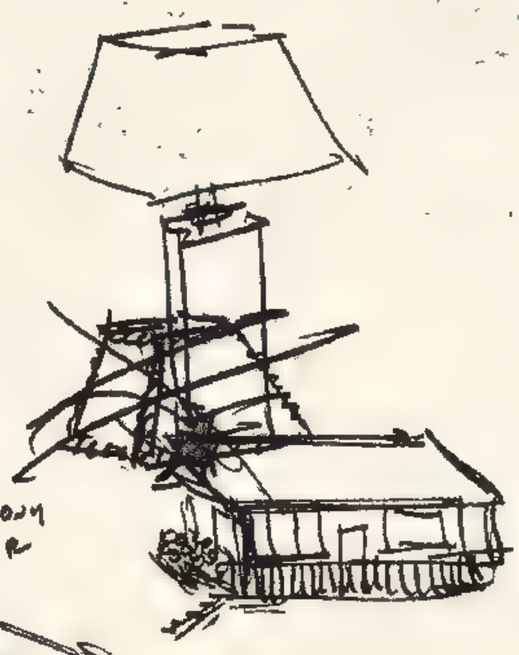
NORTH WALL
INTERIOR

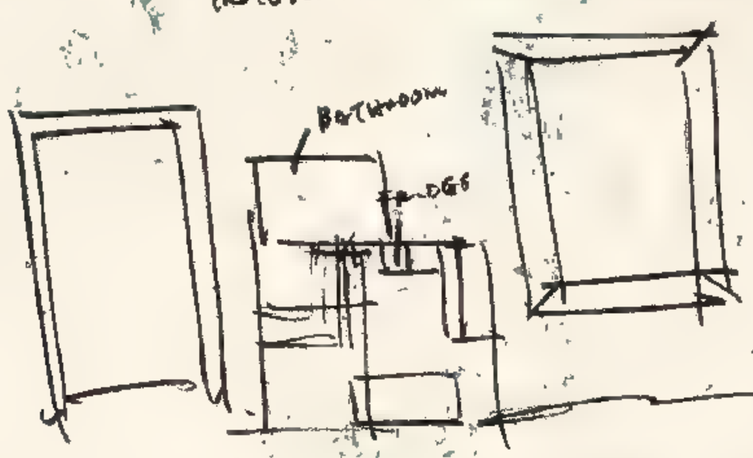
PLUSH RUG, 1½" DEEP
HARDWOOD FLOOR -
WIDE PLANKS ALTER-
NATING WITH
NARROW PLANKS



SOUTH WALL
EXTERIOR

FLW-INSPIRED
LAMP





BATHROOM

BEDS

CONVEX FRONT DOOR TO BALCONY
WATER

SINK

BACK DOOR TO HILLSIDE

CABINETS

STOVE (DOOR KLAD (NOT LIKE OURS!

Opposite Page: A picture of the road crew paving Best Intentions Avenue. I originally hoped to put this image out as a poster advertising STUMPTOWN's Autumn 2008 release...

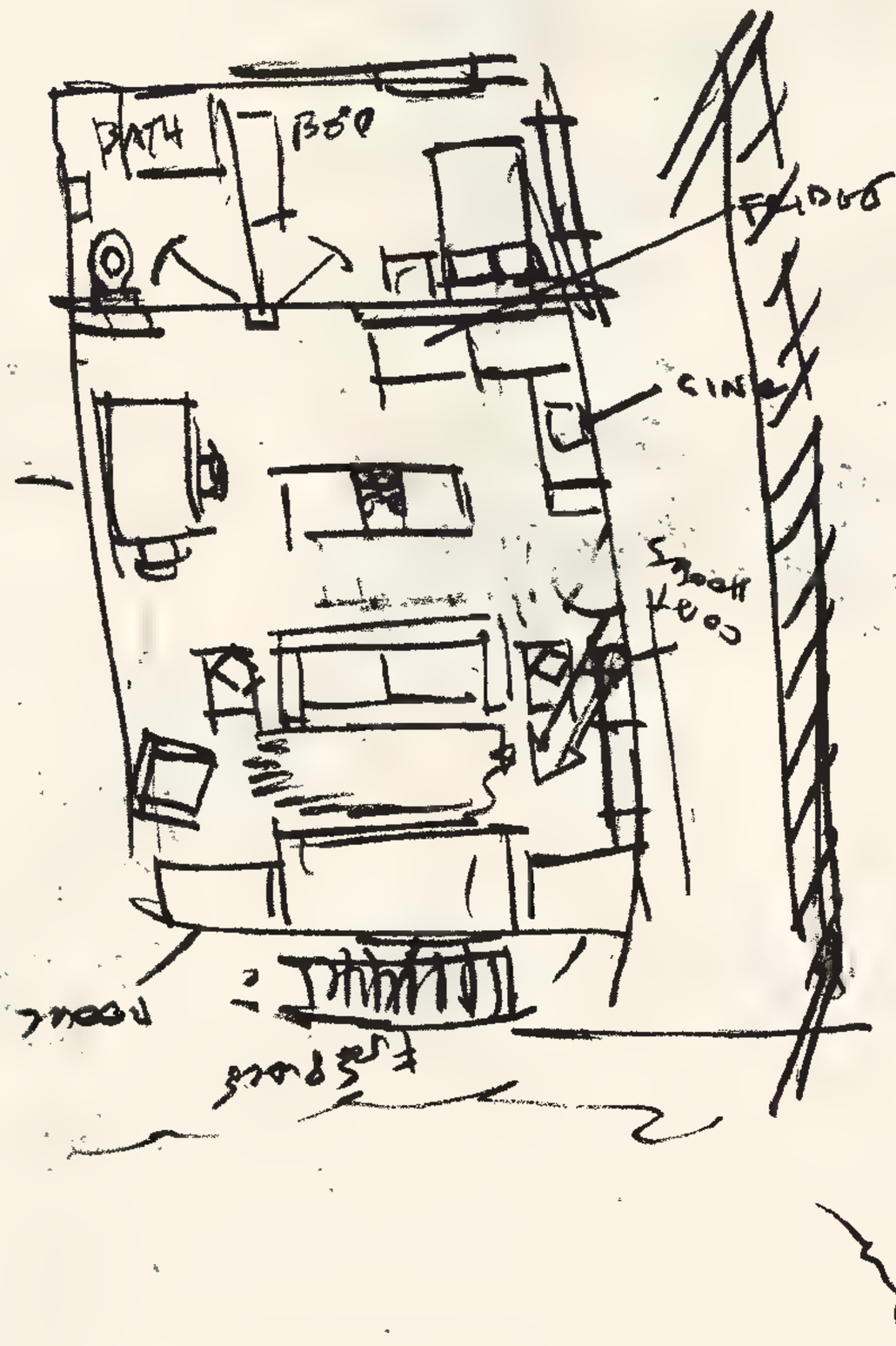
BATH

BR

CAB

CAB

CAB



BATH

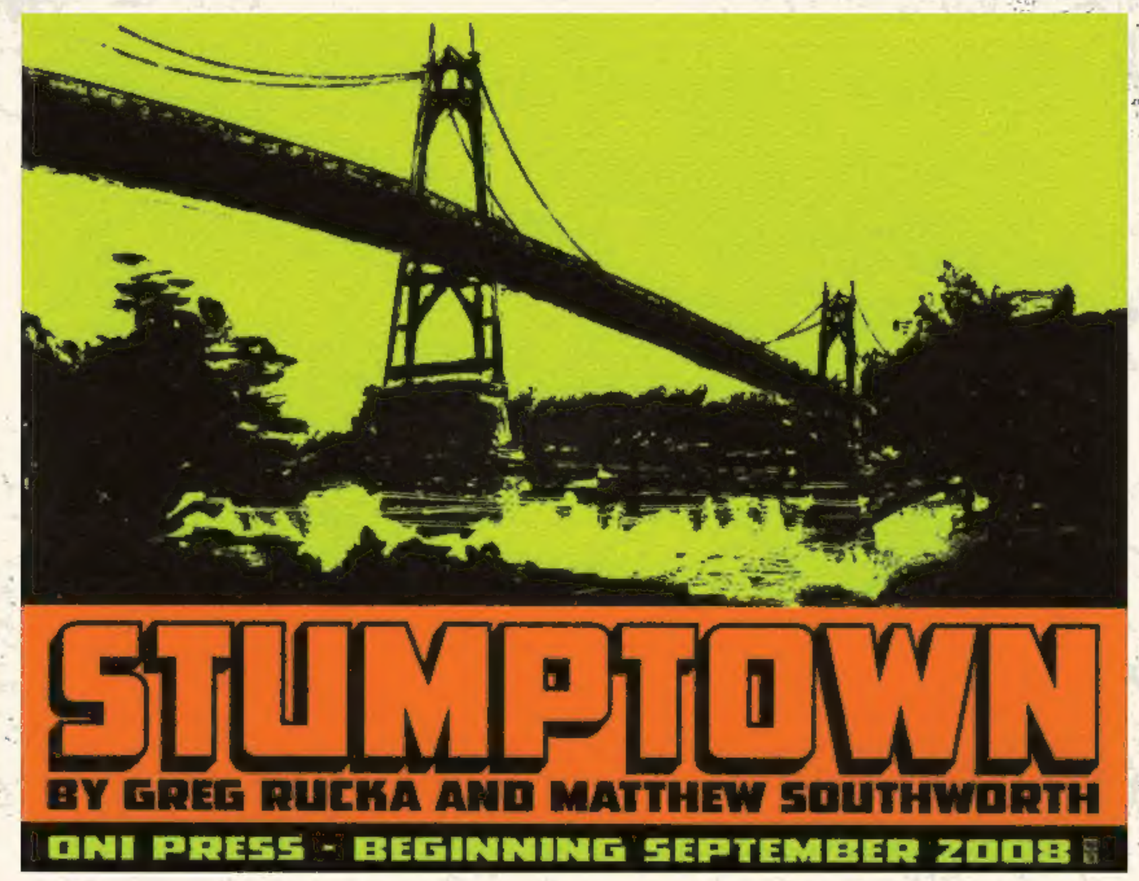
BED

CLOSET

Last two pages of this issue take place in a cabin, mostly in the dark. So I spent a while trying to get this cabin figured out, what kind of rug is in it, how many books and knickknacks do you put in a cabin? We'll see more of this place in the next issue, so it was important to get it laid out properly. And it still wound up being completely different than these sketches show.

Comics, on the other hand, have always been a serial medium, coming out monthly (-ish, cough cough) or even weekly or daily. You make a comic and it's out in a couple of months, or the work you did on January 5 is sitting beside someone's bed in February. And you can pay your rent...

There's more detailed coverage of this issue all over the internet—the serial publication medium that's infinitely quicker than monthly weekly daily hourly—but there's



lots of talk about the "death of the pamphlet." I didn't even know we were calling them pamphlets; I thought pamphlets were for telling you about gingivitis and Chlamydia. And I love collected books, graphic novels, hardcovers with all kinds of supplementary material. I'm excited to do one for *Stumptown*.

But there's something about picking up a story as it's being told... I honestly don't know what is going to happen in issue four yet. And so there are probably a hundred errors being made right this second, but if you're reading the issues and not just buying the collection, you're in the car with me and I might be lost but we'll get there soon and did you just see that girl standing out in front of that restaurant and I think we're supposed to turn left at that ramshackle old warehouse and why do you think there are so many houses for sale on this street.

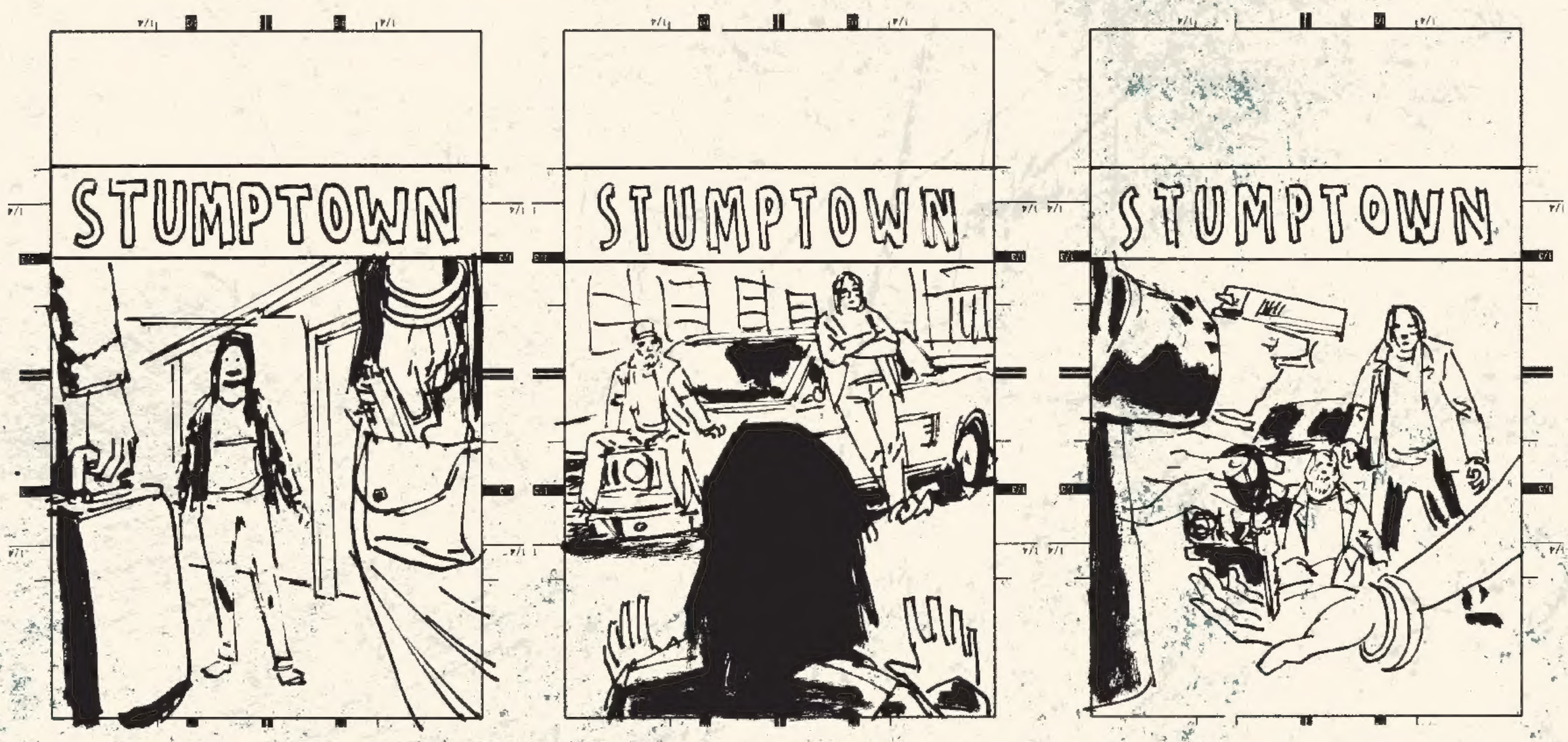
Comics have gotten expensive. Now I get what my grandparents were talking about when they'd say "I used to get those things for FIVE CENTS!" I remember there being a controversy when Marvel started pricing some of their 60-cent books at 75 cents. And the nature of comics is changing from a serial model to a "book" model in many ways, and I hope that won't be too complete. Both as a creator and as a consumer... it's nice to have this intermittent communication going on rather than just dropping a book like a bomb.

So issue one sold out in like three days. That was a total shock to me. I was afraid that we'd been promising the book for so long that people would have mostly forgotten all about it by now and that we'd be languishing on the shelves, the nerdy girl in orthopedic shoes standing by the punchbowl.

Not only did it sell, there was a lot of attention on the Internet. Lots of reviews, most of them really positive, a couple not as positive, and to tell you the truth, I stopped reading them after I read my first not totally positive review. But the next morning, I dove back in and read more and more and more. Even the negative commentary was mostly couched in something positive, and whaddaya know, I learned something from a lot of them. And I actually agreed with the negatives (and even a couple of the positives).

So I'm saying thank you for taking the time to write a review, whether you liked the book or not. It's really interesting to hear what you have to say and what you're getting from the story so far and your reaction to the art, the colors, the packaging, the characters. We're all thrilled you had such enthusiasm for the book and hope you'll continue to tell us what you think.

Maybe we should have a letters page. I'll talk to Greg and James about it. In the meantime, send your thoughts to me at matthewsouthworth@hotmail.com. I'd really like to hear them.

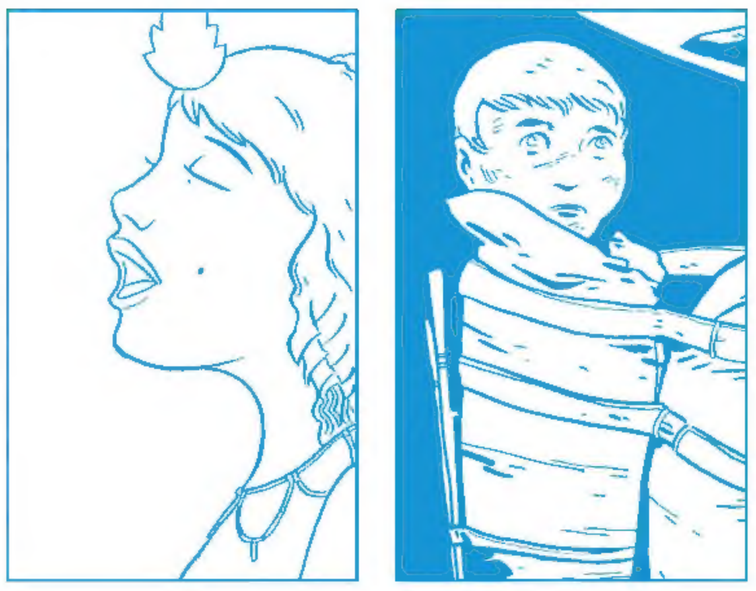


Cover roughs for issue #3 of Stumptown.

MATTHEW SOUTHWORTH, SEATTLE, JANUARY 6, 2010.

"Reading *One Soul* is like piecing together a mosaic and sweeping through the lives of eighteen rich characters, one precious moment at a time. As ambitious as it is haunting... a real achievement!"

Jeff Lemire, author of The Essex County Trilogy, Sweet Tooth



"An audacious love song to life, comics and everything that connects everyone. *One Soul* reminds me that there's only ever been one story. This is it."

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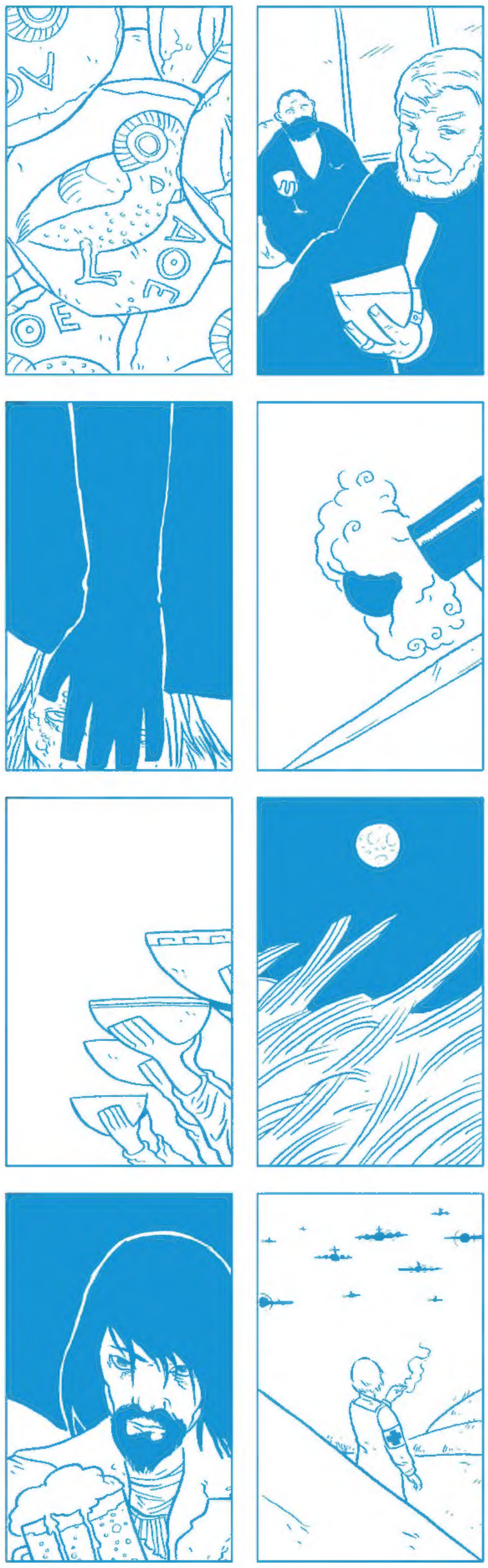

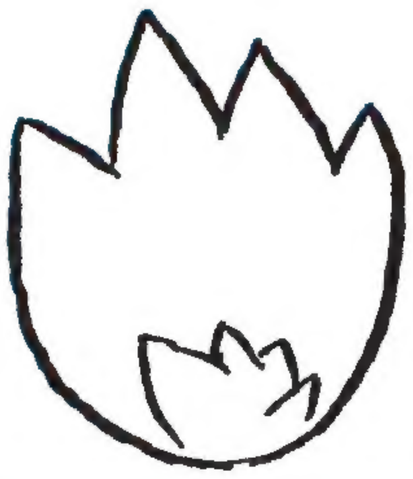

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"Experimenting with the narrative form of comics and finding new ways to use it is what has always moved the medium forward. Ray Fawkes' *One Soul* is no exception. It's massively ambitious, and rewards the reader in kind."

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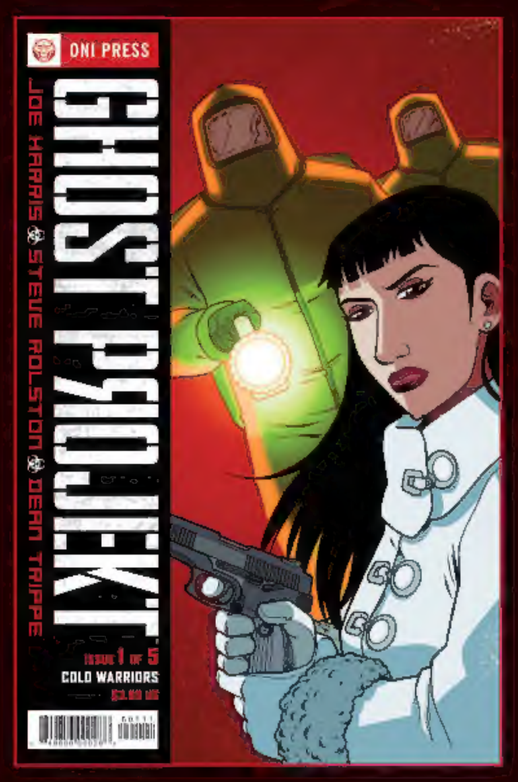

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"[Rucka] writes strong, tough, intelligent women, who don't have ridiculously disproportionate boobs... You should all check this out. Good solid stuff."

— Blair Butler, G4TV's Fresh Ink

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